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52

FURRILOUGH



PROLOGUE



THERE WAS A TIME WHEN I
LONGED TO BE **ALONE**...

...WHEN I WISHED I WAS THE LAST PERSON
ON EARTH. FREE OF CONFINES. FREE OF
MONEY. OF HAVING OR NOT HAVING. AND OF
NOT HAVING TO WATCH MAN
COMPLETE THE RUIN.

MAN. MEN. I JUST WANTED TO
BE FREE OF MEN. THEIR TOUCH.
THEIR DECAY.

THE TRANSCENDENCE OF NATURE
WITH ME ITS LAST WITNESS...

A CHILD'S FANTASY...

LATER THERE CAME A TIME WHEN I COULD
NO LONGER STAND TO BE ALONE. WHEN I
SOUGHT OUT COMPANIONSHIP. WHEN I
CRAVED UNION...

...AND NOW, WHEN THE CHILD OF THAT UNION
IS ALL THAT I HAVE, I WISH THAT I HAD **MORE**.

MAMA...

DARLING...

EH..?

SOMETHING...
SOMETHING
IN THE AIR...

THAT
LIGHT..!

MAMA...



NEVER!

...WE'LL
TAKE YOURS
FIRST!

NO?
THEN...

YOU...

...YOU SO
MUCH AS...

SLASH!

AAAARRGHH!!!

...TOUCH
MY LITTLE
GIRL...



...AND
THERE'LL
BE...NO
PLACE...

...ON EARTH...
FOR YOU TO
HIDE.

NO?
THEN HOW
ABOUT IN
HELL?

NO.



HA HA
HA HA
HA HA

MAMA!

NNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNN!!



NINJARA

created by
DEAN • CHRIS
CLARRAIN • ALLAN

YES. IF YOU
CAN IMAGINE
SUCH A
THING...

TO BE CONTINUED...

NINJARA

ONCE I WAS CALLED
THE GREATEST THIEF
IN ALL JAPAN...

NOW I CAN'T EVEN GET PAST
A NO-NECK DOORMAN.

NO, I **DON'T** HAVE
AN APPOINTMENT.
I'VE ALREADY
EXPLAINED THIS--

WORD'S OUT THAT
TETSU KONO IS
LOOKING TO HIRE ME
FOR A JOB.

I'M HERE TO TELL
HIM MY
SERVICES **ARE**
AVAILABLE...**FOR A**
PRICE.

BY CLARRAIN & ALLAN

NOW MAKE LIKE
YOUR **JOB
DESCRIPTION** AND
TELL YOUR MASTER
THAT I'M HERE.

CHOP
CHOP

NO.

NO? WHAT
THE HELL'S
YOUR
PROBLEM?

YOU.

THIEF.
NO HONOR...
DOROBO.

CHILD.
NO HUSBAND.
**HIROGERU
ONNA.**

WHAT DID
YOU CALL
ME?!

IF YOU'RE TRYING
TO PUSH MY
BUTTONS,
YOU'VE
SUCCEEDED...

...**CHIMPOKO NO
ATAMA!**

THAT'S
ENOUGH,
ICHIRO, LET
HER IN.

HA. **ICHIRO**
IS SAVED BY
THE BELL.

GO.

CHISAI
CHINCHIN.

TETSU KONO.
I AM
HONORED...

...HOWEVER, YOU
REALLY SHOULD
TEACH YOUR HIRED
HELP BETTER
MANNERS.

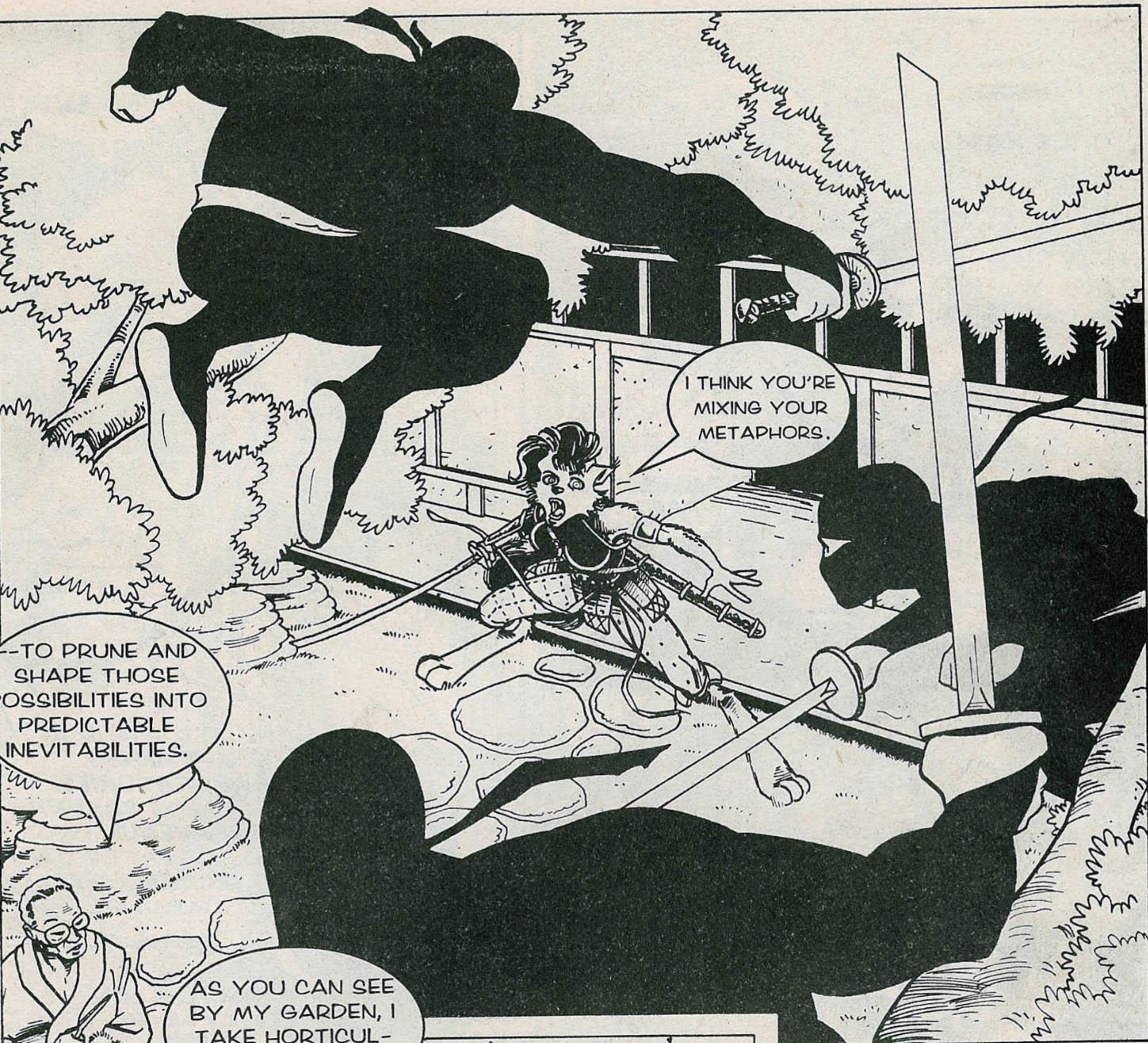
NINJARA,
I, TOO, AM
HONORED

...HOWEVER,
ICHIRO ACTED IN
A MANNER
CONSISTENT WITH
HIS FUNCTION.

AN OPEN DOOR
LEADS TO MANY
POSSIBILITIES. TOO
MANY, IN FACT.

I KNOW YOU WILL
APPRECIATE MY
NEED TO NARROW
THE PASSAGEWAY.

?



--TO PRUNE AND
SHAPE THOSE
POSSIBILITIES INTO
PREDICTABLE
INEVITABILITIES.

I THINK YOU'RE
MIXING YOUR
METAPHORS.



AS YOU CAN SEE
BY MY GARDEN, I
TAKE HORTICUL-
TURE QUITE SERI-
OUSLY.

NOT ONLY AM I A
MODEST PRACTI-
TIONER, BUT I AM
A COLLECTOR AS
WELL...

...A COLLECTOR OF
THE WORLD'S MOST
EXOTIC AND RARE
FLORA



ITS IMPORTANCE
TO ME IS
IMMEASURABLE.



I WISH YOU TO
STEAL FOR ME
THE SEED OF AN
ORCHID. IT IS THE
LAST SEED OF
ITS KIND.



IN FACT, THE SEED
IS THE ONLY LINK
TO ITS **GENUS**.
THERE ARE NO
LIVING PLANTS
LEFT.



I ENTRUST YOU
WITH A GREAT
TASK, **NINJARA.**

I AM **INDEED**
HONORED,
TETSU KONO.

MY **FEE** IS AS
IT ALWAYS
HAS BEEN.

HALF UP
FRONT.

I NEVER
FAIL.

SEE THAT
YOU **DON'T.**

THE SEED IS HELD AT
SEIRANKAI
LABORATORIES.
THEY ARE ON **SAKURA-**
DORI AVENUE, TWO
BLOCKS EAST OF THE
KASUMIGASEKI
BUILDING.

I KNOW THE
LOCATION.
WHAT DO THEY
HAVE FOR
SECURITY?

THE USUAL,
PLUS A TEAM OF
HEAVILY-ARMED
GUARDS,
TWENTY-FOUR
HOURS

WHAT ELSE
DO I NEED
TO KNOW?

THE SEED IS TO
THE ORCHID
KNOWN AS THE
GILGAMESAI.

LATER,
GEJASHIKU.

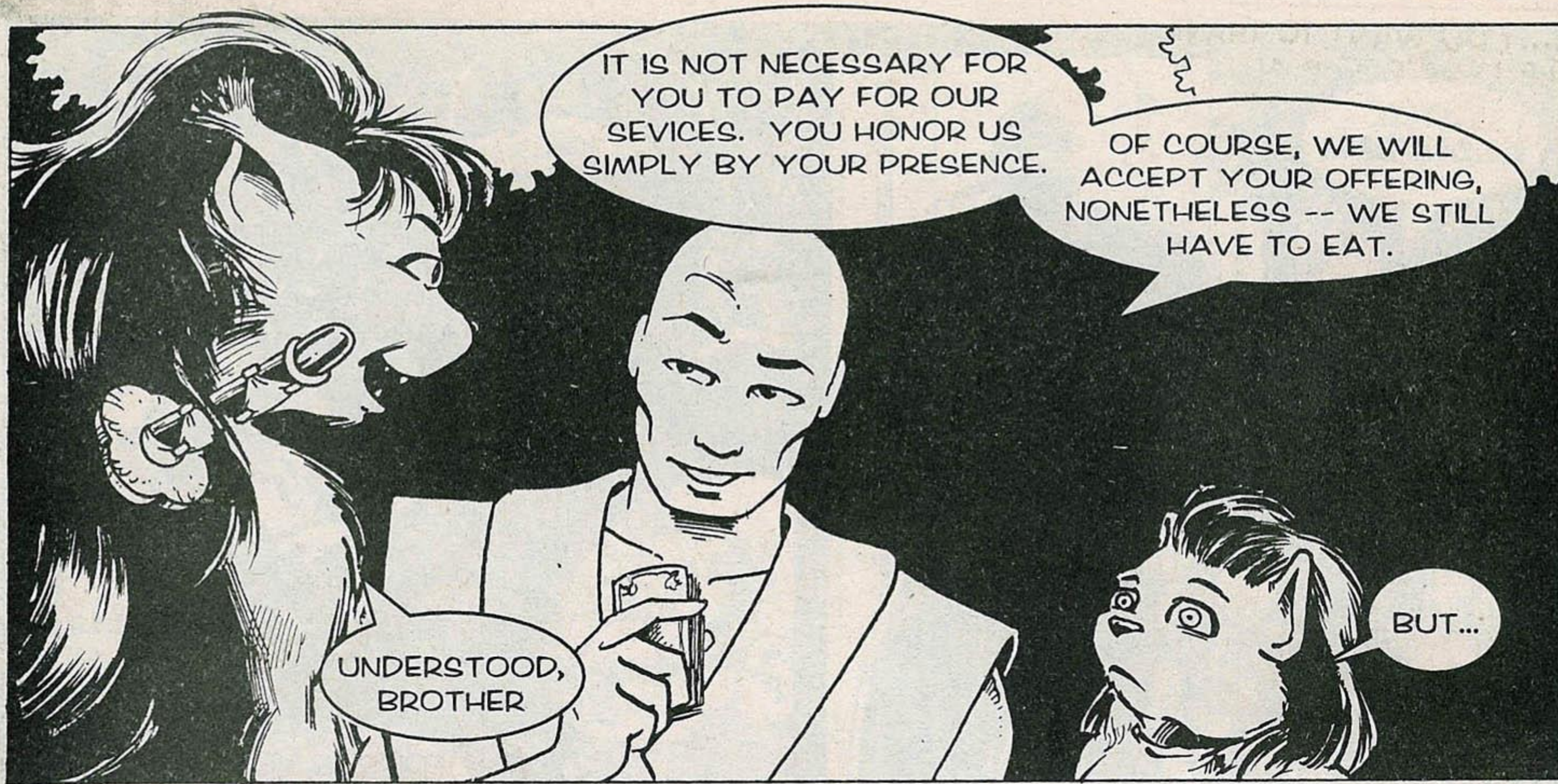
JORO.

FOLLOW HER,
ICHIRO.
DISCOVER HER
WEAKNESS...

"...AND BRING
IT TO ME."

WHATEVER
YOU WISH,
NINJARA.

WHAT I WISH, PRIEST, IS
**PROTECTION FOR MY
DAUGHTER.** I AM WILLING
TO PAY YOUR TEMPLE FOR
ITS SERVICES.

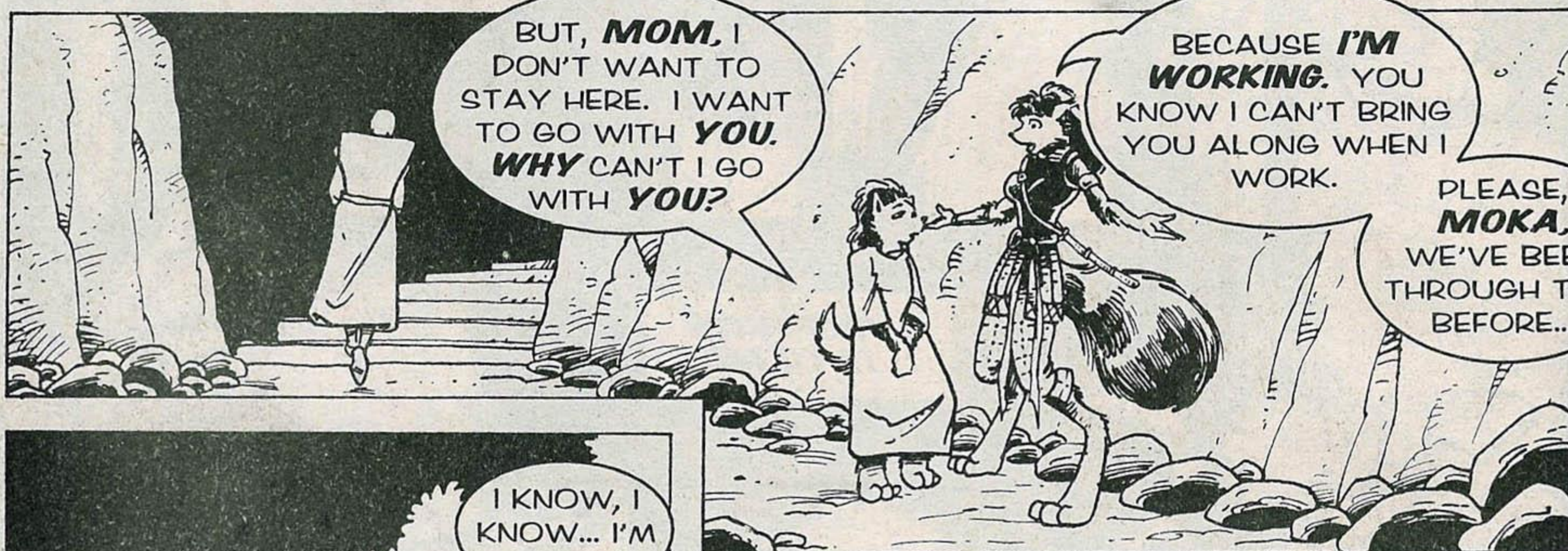


IT IS NOT NECESSARY FOR YOU TO PAY FOR OUR SERVICES. YOU HONOR US SIMPLY BY YOUR PRESENCE.

OF COURSE, WE WILL ACCEPT YOUR OFFERING, NONETHELESS -- WE STILL HAVE TO EAT.

UNDERSTOOD, BROTHER

BUT...



BUT, **MOM**, I DON'T WANT TO STAY HERE. I WANT TO GO WITH **YOU**. **WHY** CAN'T I GO WITH **YOU**?

BECAUSE **I'M WORKING**. YOU KNOW I CAN'T BRING YOU ALONG WHEN I WORK.

PLEASE, **MOKA**, WE'VE BEEN THROUGH THIS BEFORE...



I KNOW, I KNOW... I'M SORRY

IT'S JUST THAT I WANT TO BE LIKE YOU.



GOOD LUCK!

BE LIKE **ME**?

GOD FORBID.

"THE GREATEST THIEF IN ALL JAPAN."
CUE THE **LAUGH TRACK**.

MONEY. I'M ONLY DOING IT FOR THE
MONEY. I'VE ALWAYS ONLY DONE IT
FOR THE MONEY.

BUT THIS IS DIFFERENT. THIS
MONEY WILL BUY US **TIME**.

TIME TO FOLLOW THE TRAIL.
TO DISSECT **THE CLUE**. THE SINGLE
CLUE. THE SINGLE CLUE I HAVE TO
FIND MY HUSBAND'S **MURDERERS**.

MOKOSHAN... I WAS THE GREATEST
THIEF IN ALL JAPAN AND YET I ALLOWED
THEM TO STEAL YOU FROM ME.

MOKOSHAN, MY DEAREST...



SCREW THE LAME IRONY.



I WANT REVENGE.

CONTINUED...

DARKNESS
FROM
DARKNESS



SLEEK SHADOW
AGAINST THE MOON

THE THIEF IN
THE NIGHT...

NINJARA

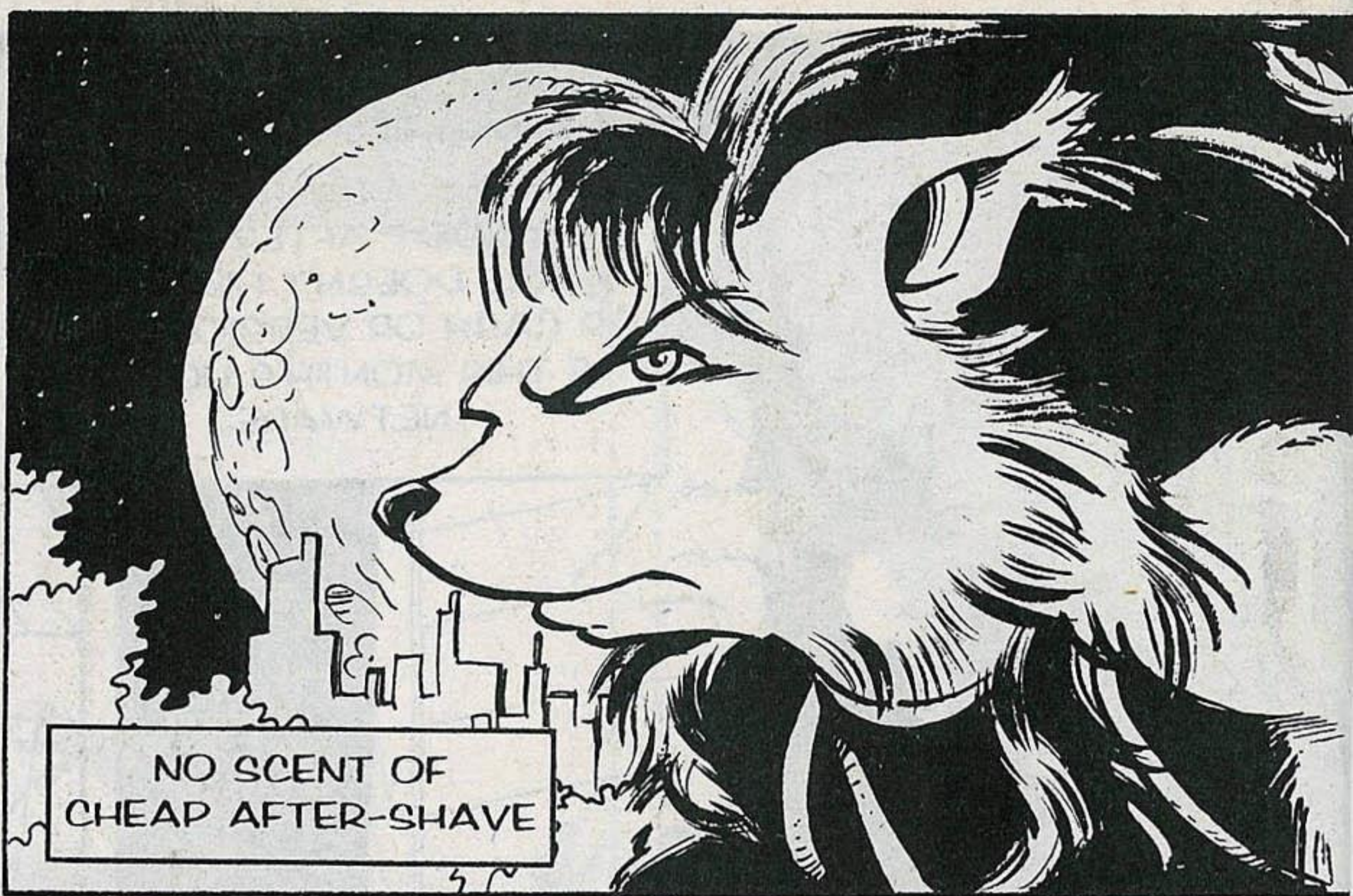
SEED OF DESTRUCTION
chapter three

created by
DEAN • CHRIS
CLARRAIN • ALLAN

NO INFRARED.
NO CAMERAS
NO MOTION-
DETECTORS

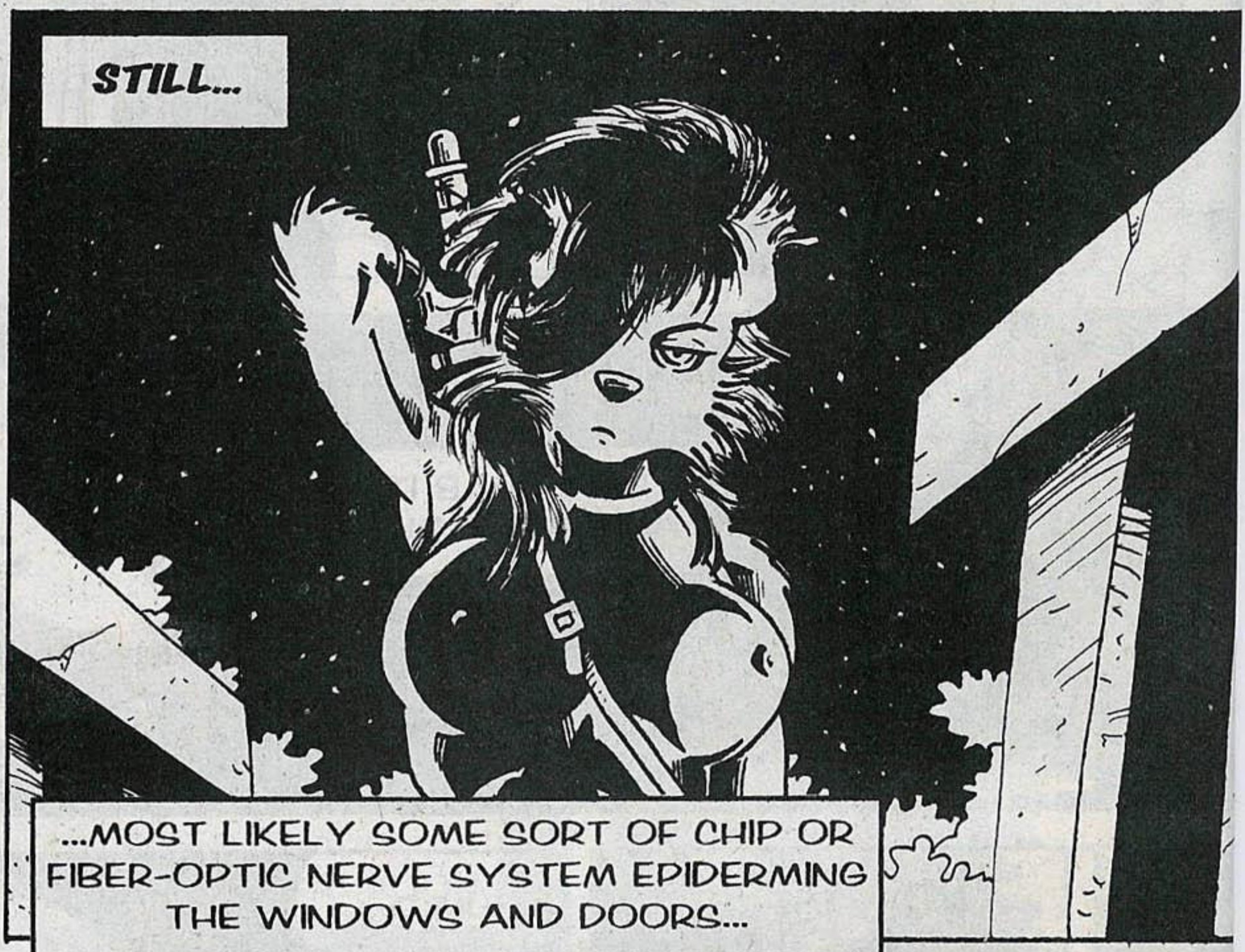


NO SCENT OF
CHEAP AFTER-SHAVE

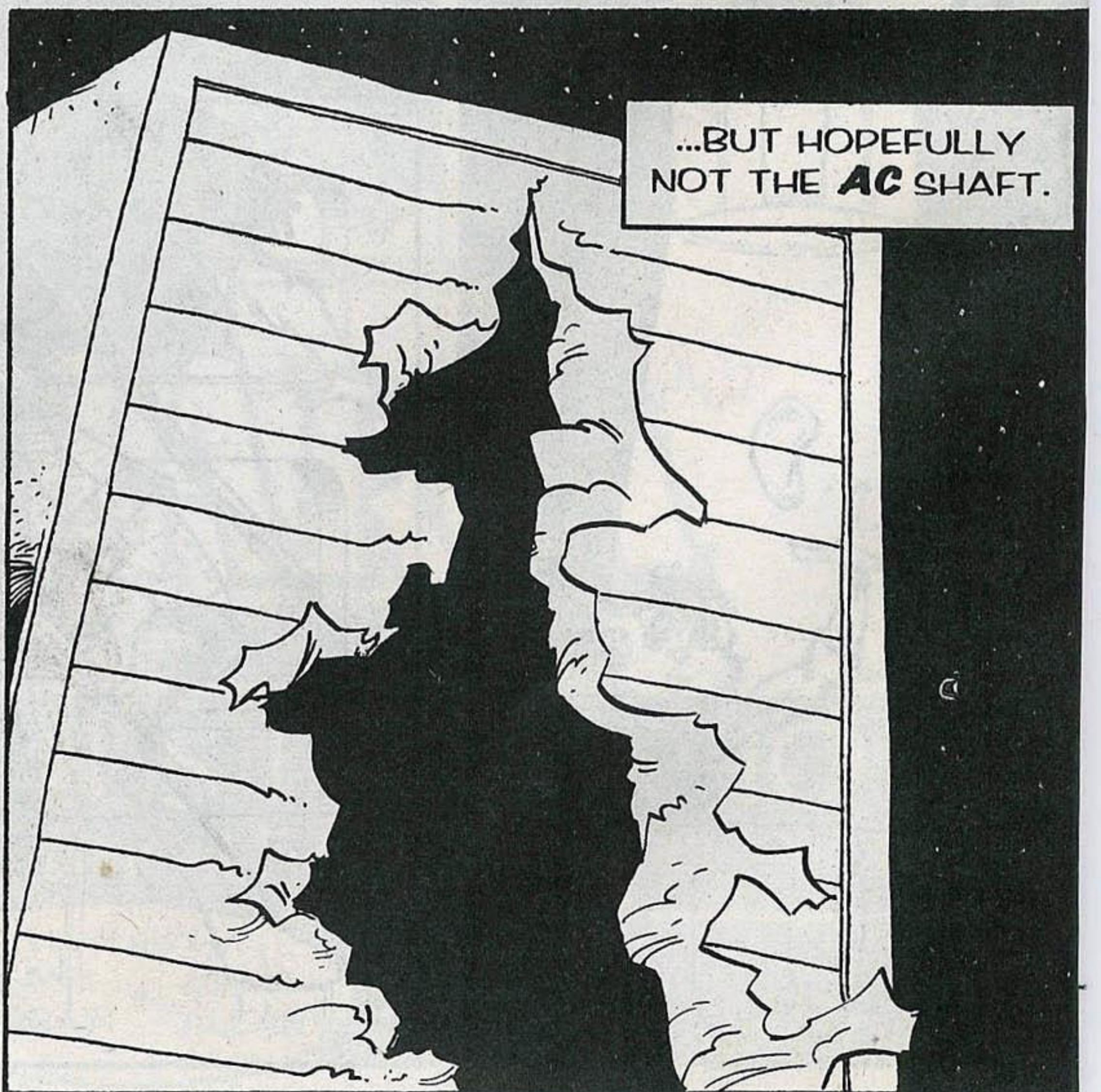


STILL...

...MOST LIKELY SOME SORT OF CHIP OR
FIBER-OPTIC NERVE SYSTEM EPIDERMING
THE WINDOWS AND DOORS...



...BUT HOPEFULLY
NOT THE **AC** SHAFT.

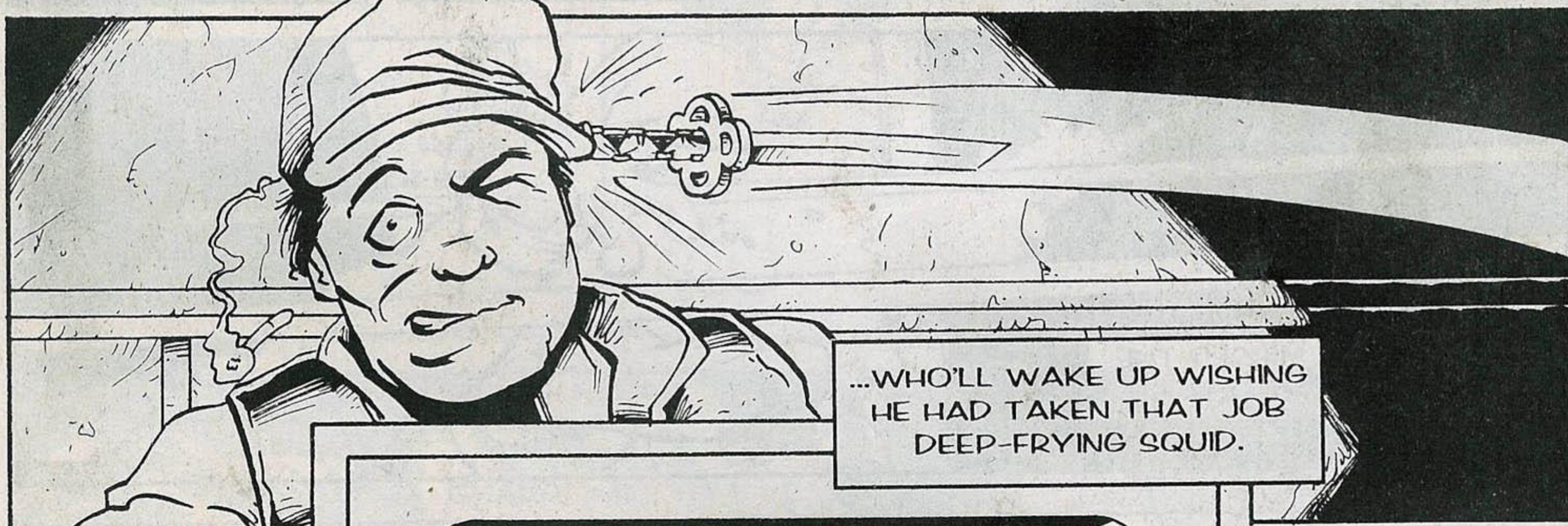
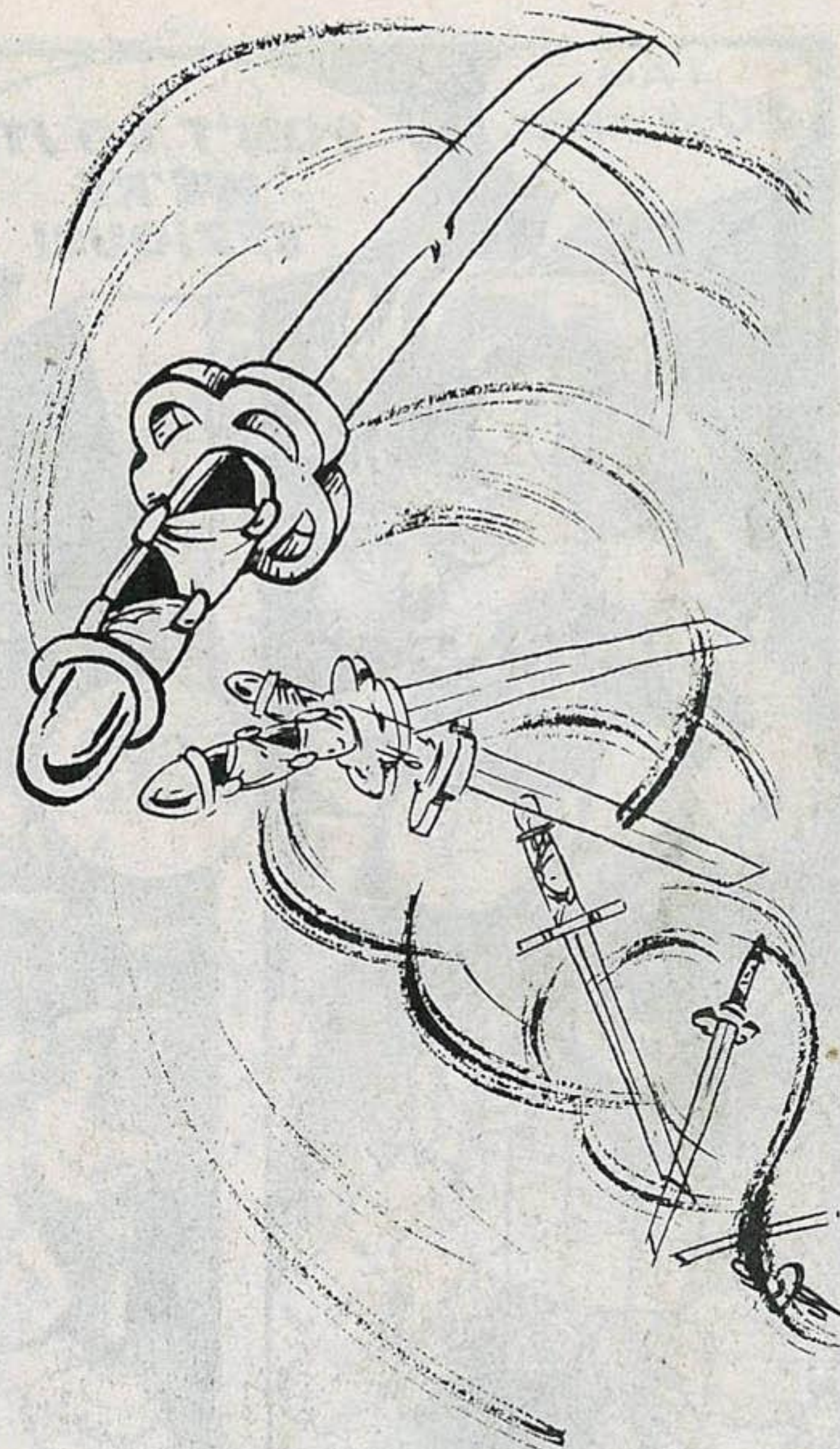
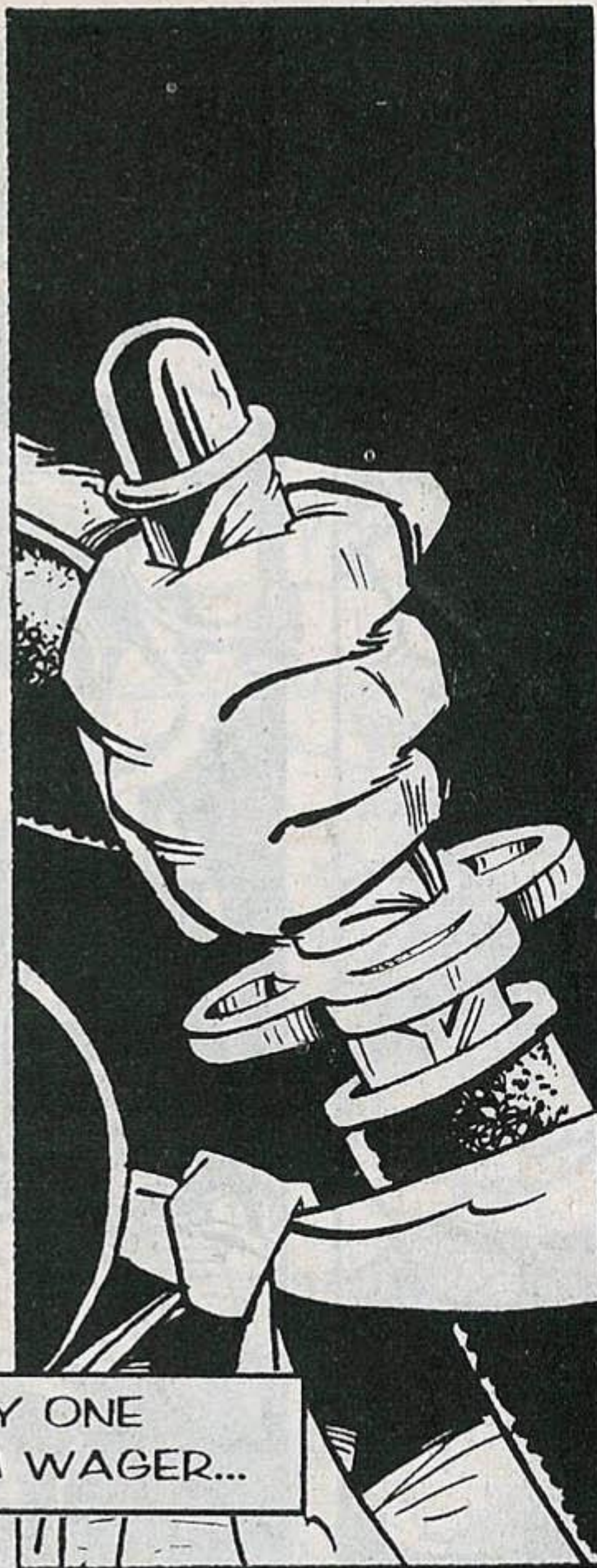


SLASH

SO FAR
SO GOOD.

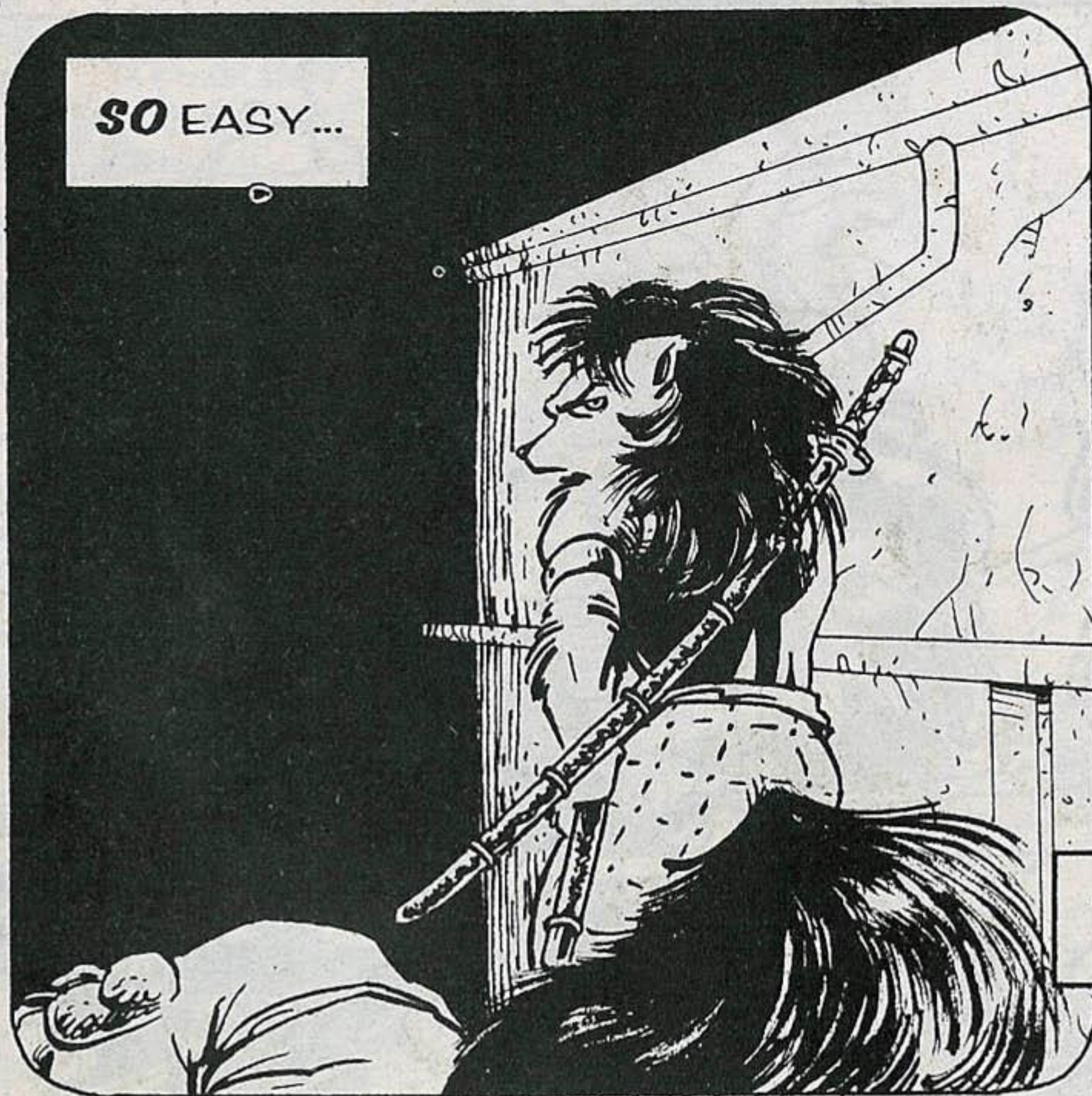


ONLY ONE
MINIMUM WAGER...

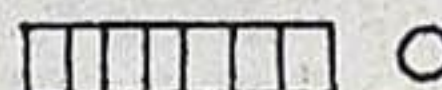


...WHO'LL WAKE UP WISHING
HE HAD TAKEN THAT JOB
DEEP-FRYING SQUID.

SO EASY...



TOO EASY...





...OR AM I JUST BEING PARANOID? AFTER ALL, THIS PLACE DOESN'T HIDE GOLD OR CASH OR VERSION 2000 OF THIS MONTH'S HOTTEST NETWARE...

IT'S JUST A SEED.



JUST GRAB IT AND RUN, GIRL...



JUST...

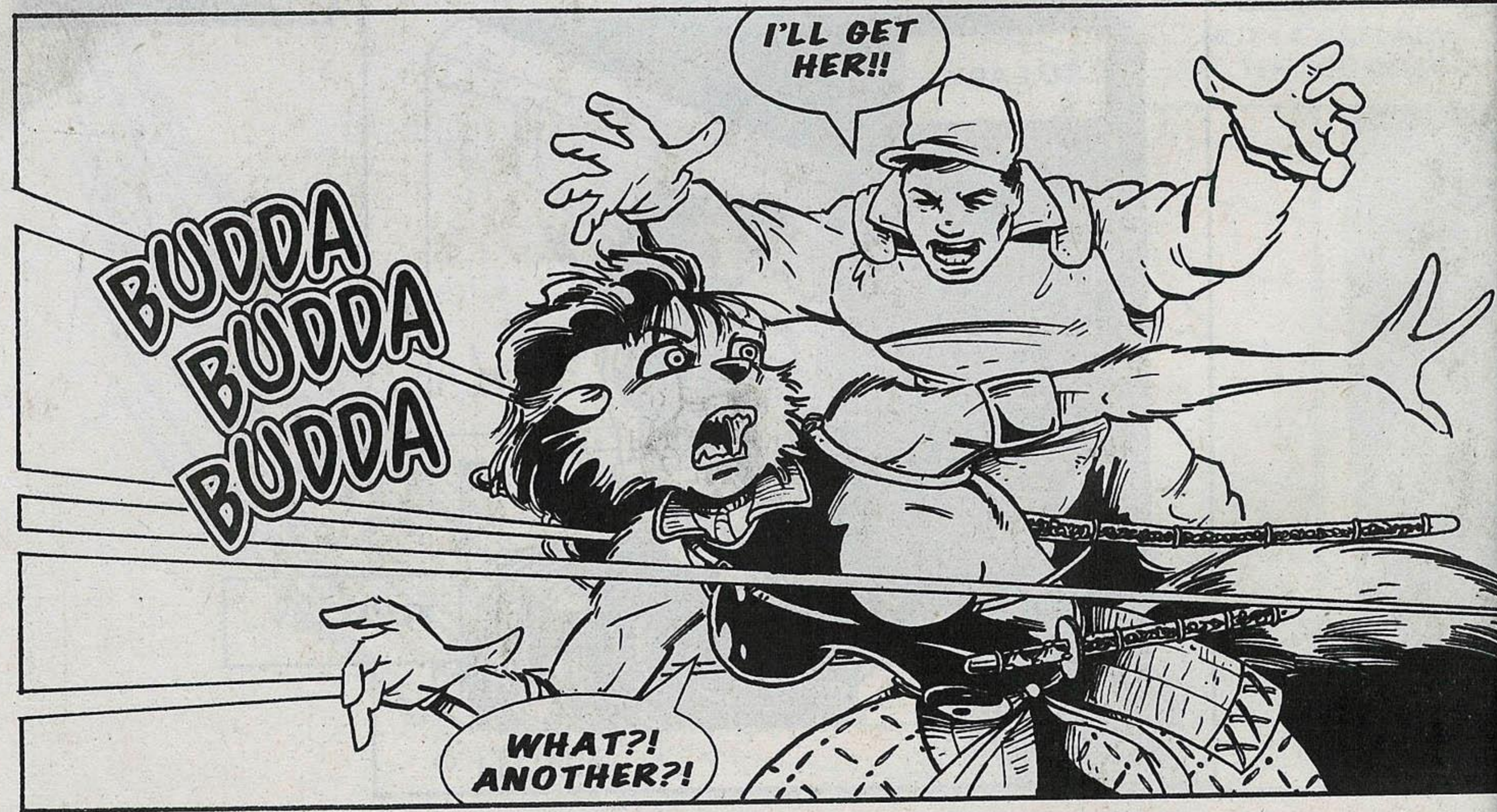
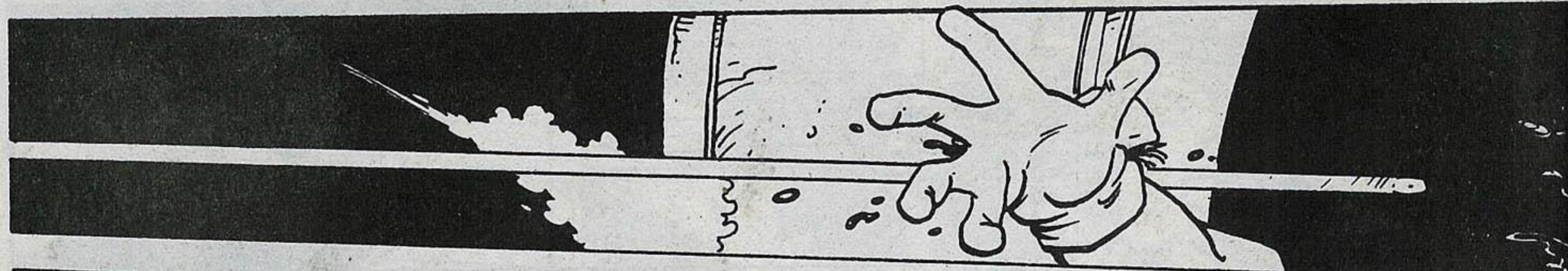


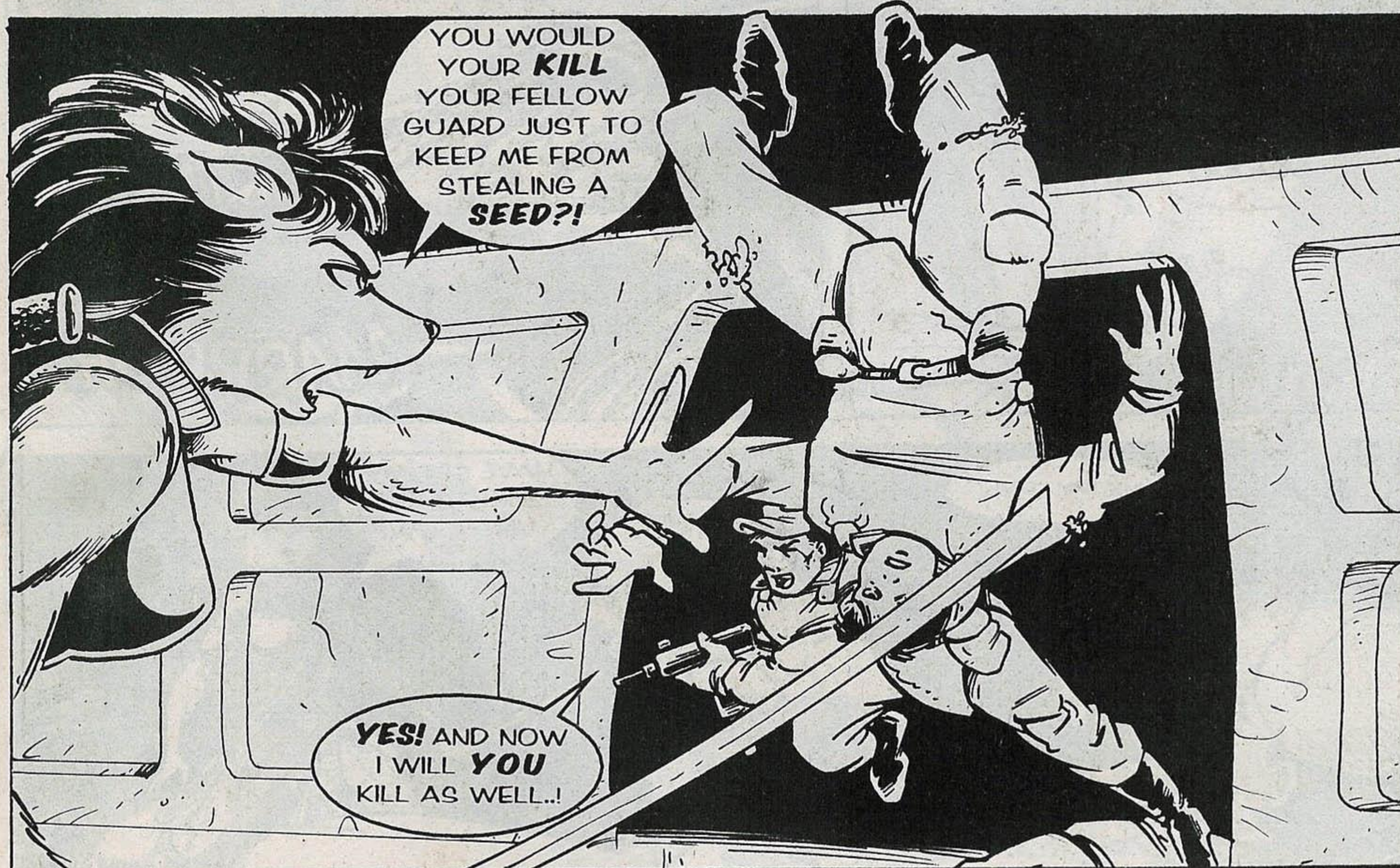
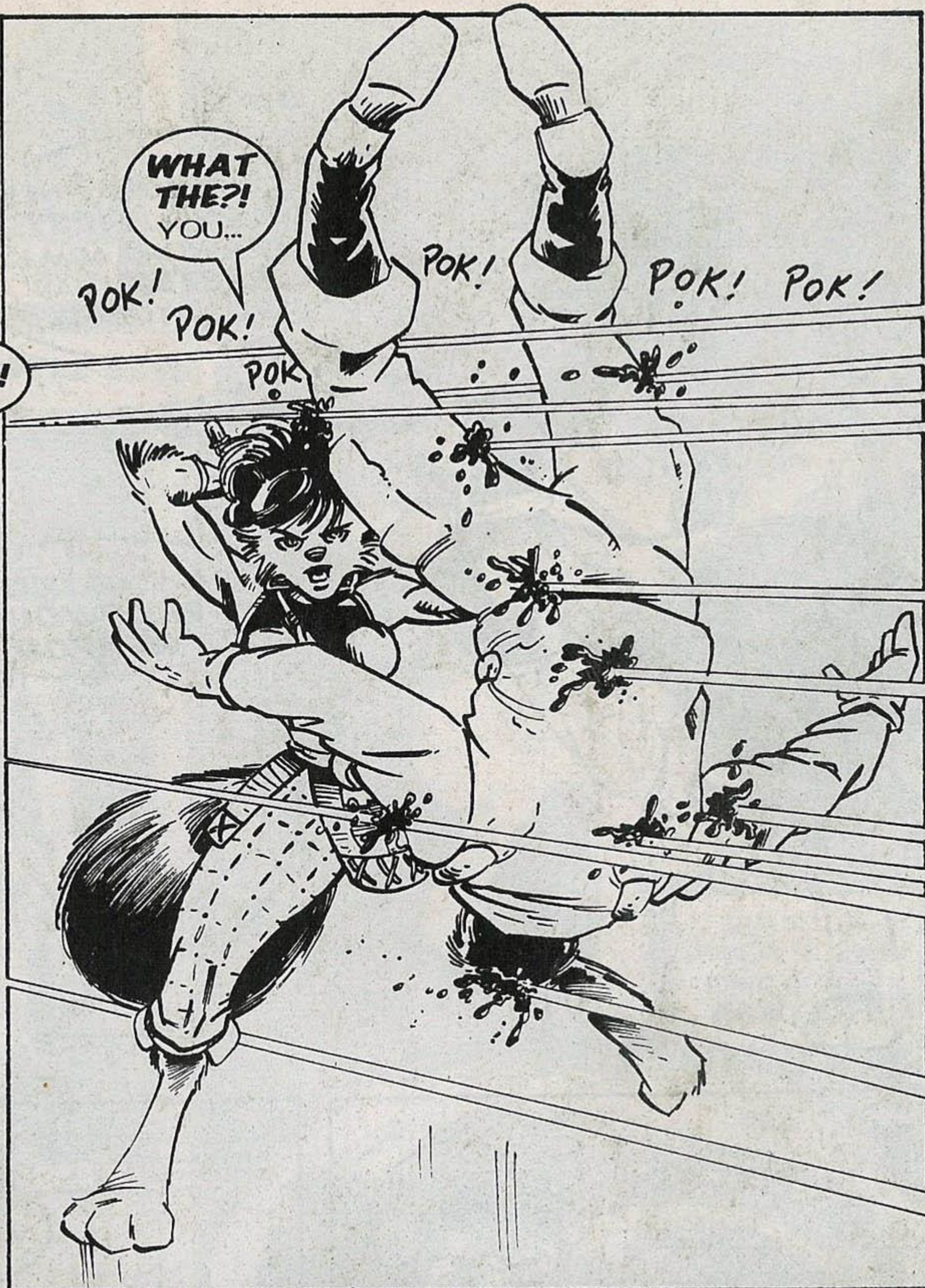
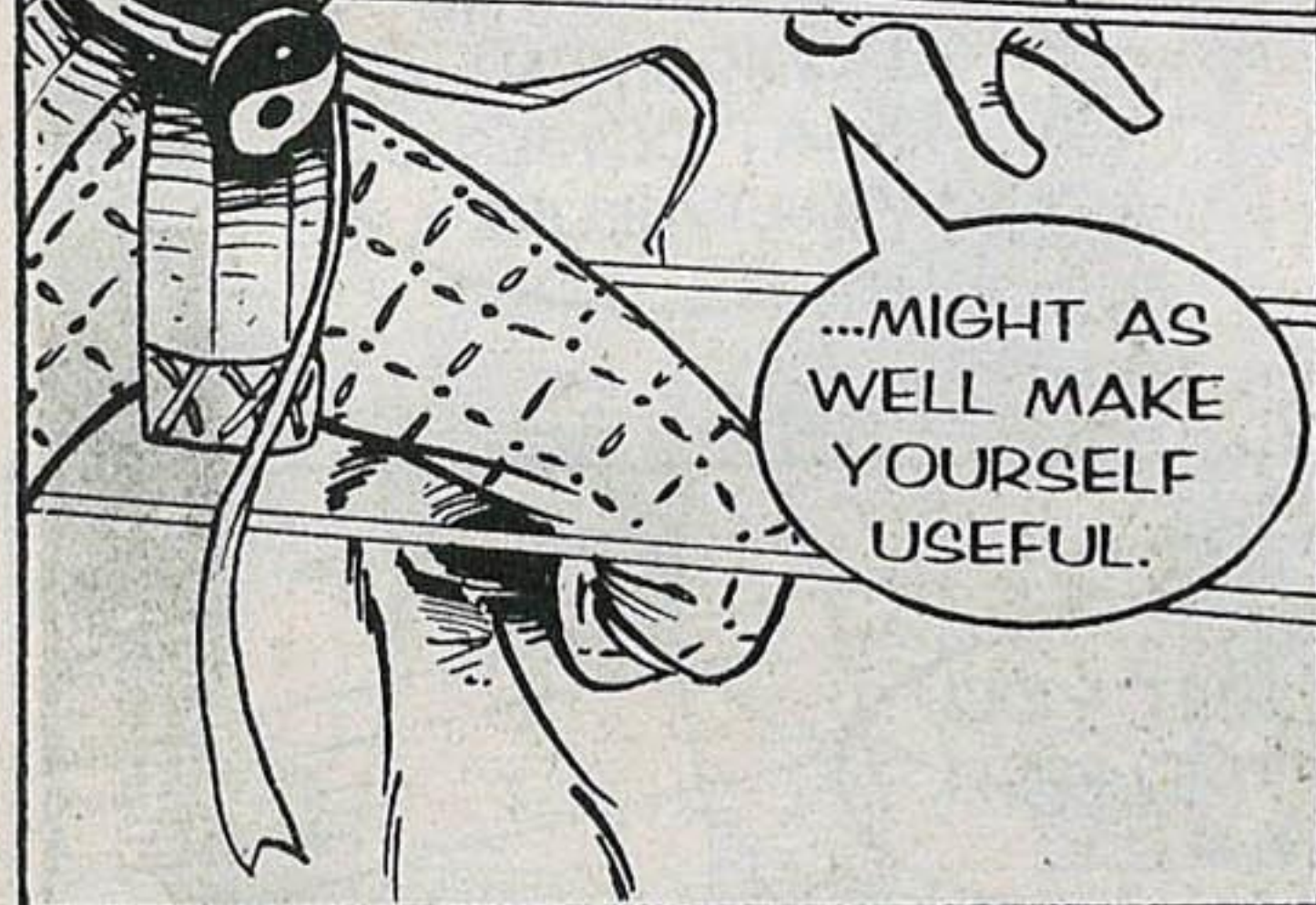
UNKO...!

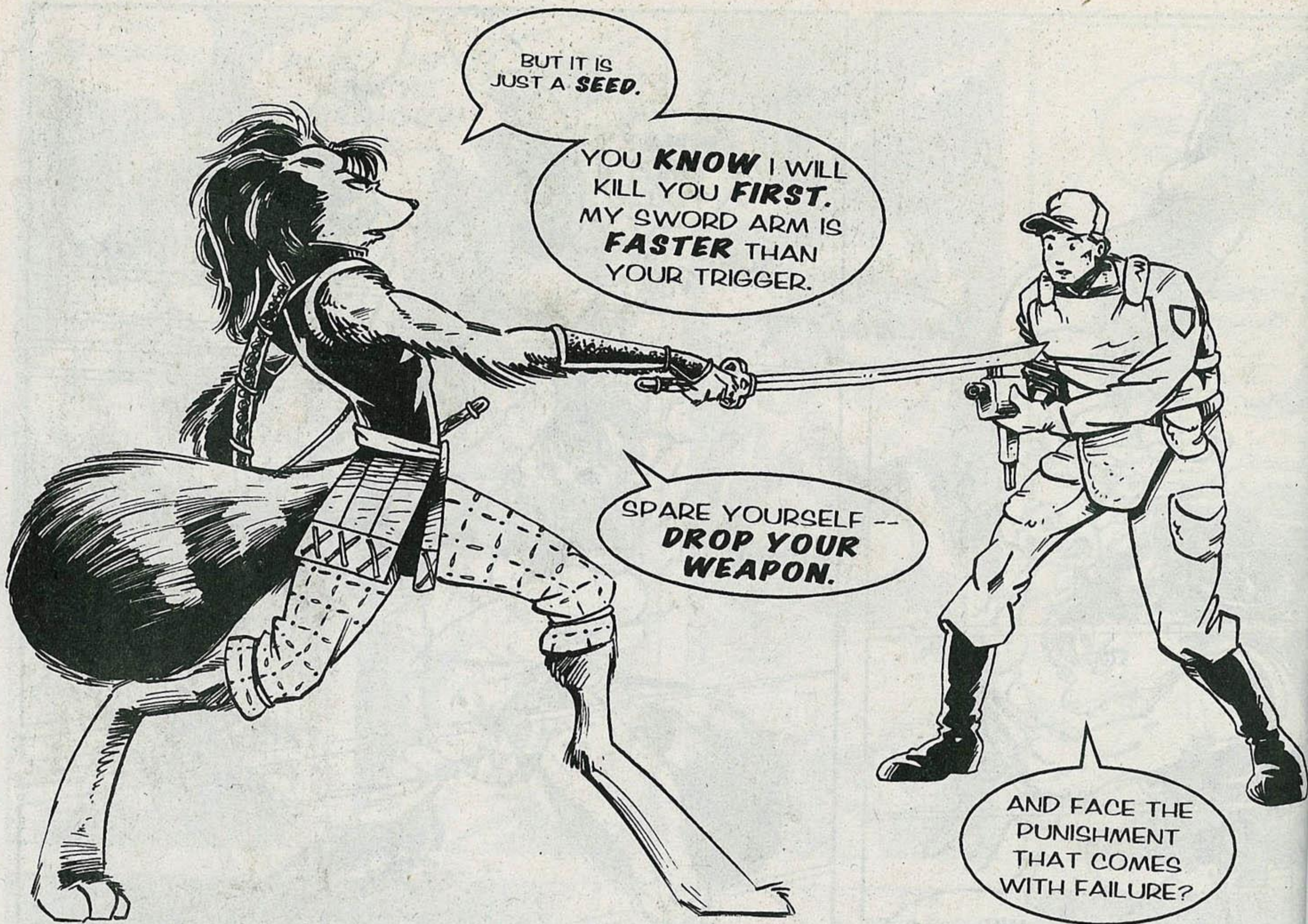
KUMO!

THIEF!

STOP WHERE YOU ARE! WE WON'T HESITATE TO SHOOT!



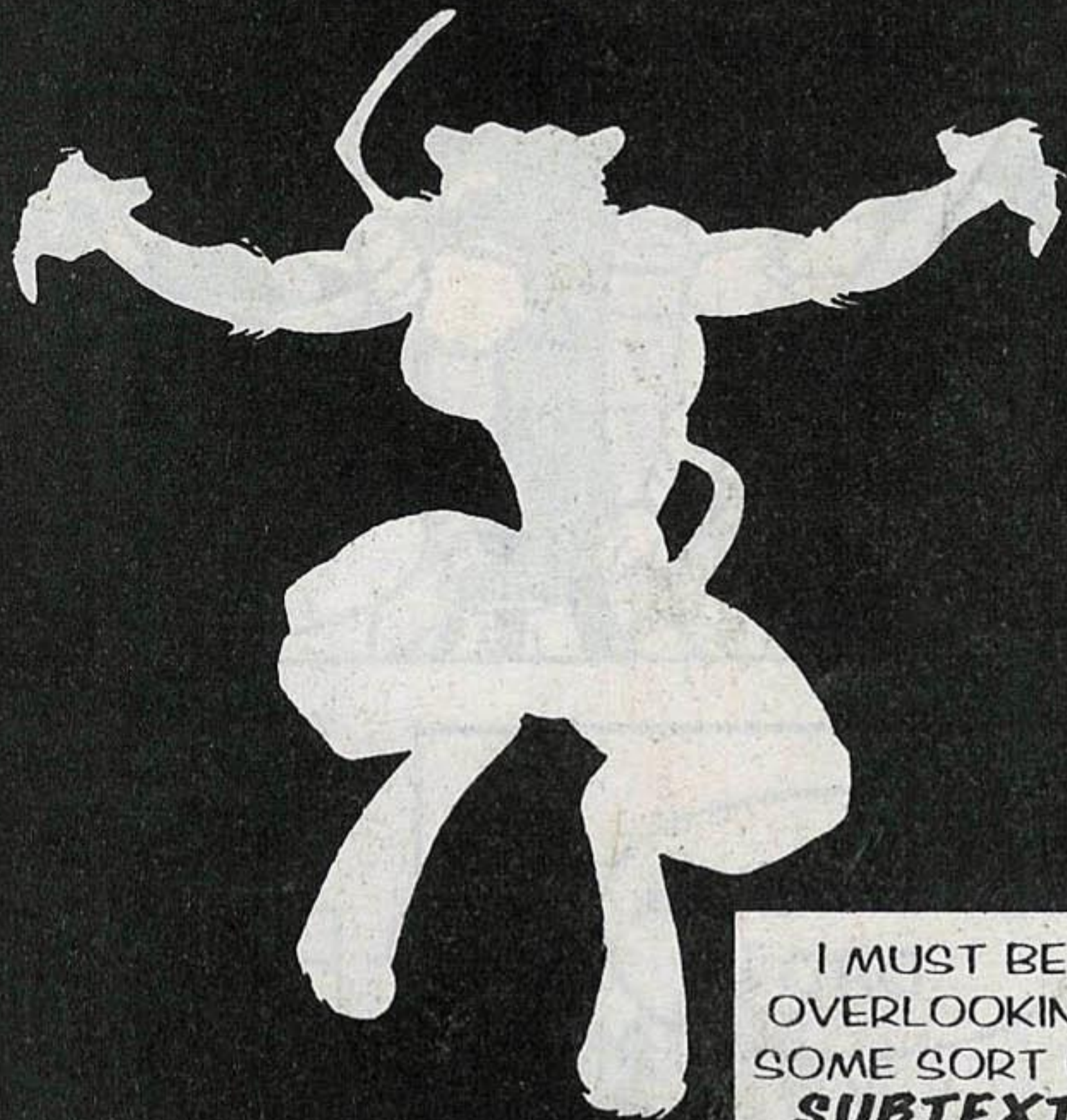




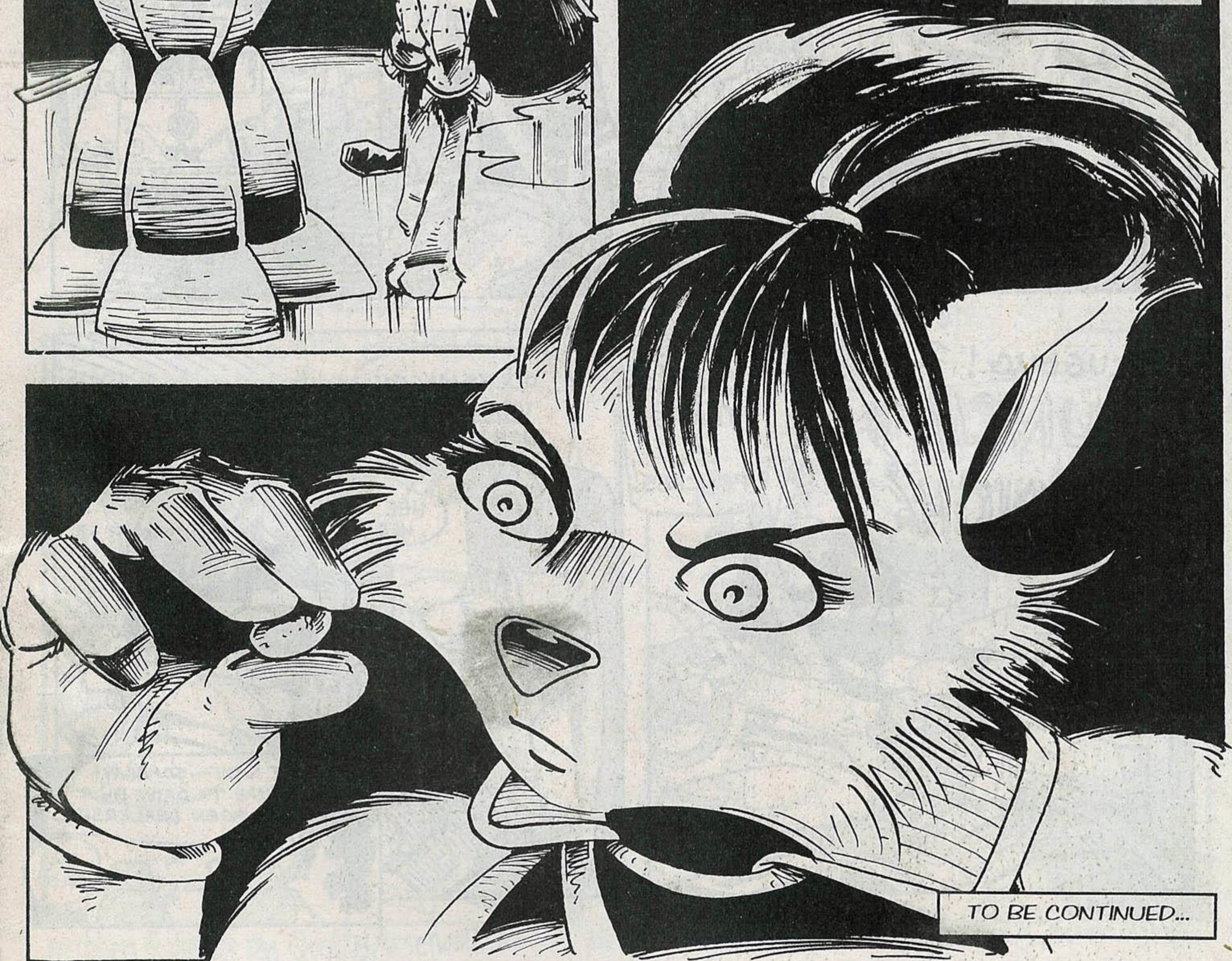
ALL THIS PAIN
AND DEATH...

...OVER A **SEED.**

A SIMPLE SEED.



I MUST BE
OVERLOOKING
SOME SORT OF
SUBTEXT.



TO BE CONTINUED...